CHURCH OF GOD Evangel

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CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

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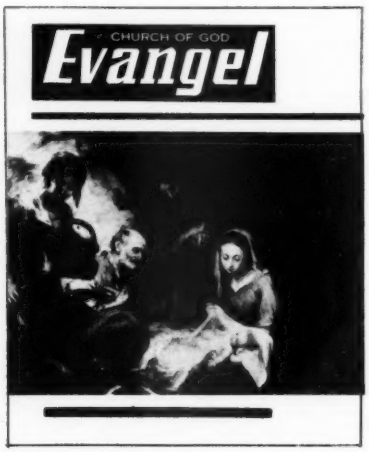

The Adoration of the Shepherds by **Murillo**

CHURCH OF GOD
Evangel

Official Voice of the Church of God

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1. In the verbal inspiration of the Bible. 2. In one God eternally existing in three persons; namely, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. That Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of the Father, conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary. That Jesus was crucified, buried, and raised from the dead; that He ascended to heaven and is today at the right hand of the Father as the Intercessor. 4. That all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and that repentance is commanded of God for all and necessary for forgiveness of sins. 5. That justification, regeneration, and the new birth are wrought by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ. 6. In sanctification subsequent to the new birth, through faith in the blood of Christ; through the Word, and by the Holy Ghost. 7. Holiness to be God's standard of living for His people. 8. In the baptism of the Holy Ghost subsequent to a clean heart. 9. In speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, and that it is the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. 10. In water baptism by immersion, and all who repent should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. 11. Divine healing is provided for all in the atonement. 12. In the Lord's Supper and washing of the saints' feet. 13. In the premillennial second coming of Jesus. First, to resurrect the righteous dead and to catch away the living saints to Him in the air. Second, to reign on the earth a thousand years. 14. In the bodily resurrection; eternal life for the righteous and eternal punishment for the wicked.

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Editorial

FOR CENTURIES GOD had an appointment to meet man in the person of the Messiah. This appointment was kept in Bethlehem nearly two thousand years ago.

The prophets had foretold this great event and the badgered Jews had looked for it with longing. It is to be expected that an event such as God's meeting man in one life would be unusual and miraculous, for it had never been done before and would never be done again. It was the greatest event of all time. The divine appointment was between an infinite God and finite man, a loving God and wrathful man, a holy God and evil man; and that appointment was kept in the person of Jesus Christ, born as a Babe in Bethlehem. This was no ordinary babe, for virtually everything connected with His birth was unusual. When God met man in the person of Christ, everything that touched the event was providential in character. The extraordinary, unknowable, divine, eternal character of this birth can be seen in four manifestations never seen before by man:

1. Its Timeliness
2. Its Nature
3. Its Revelation
4. Its Effects

Consider these things and you can see that this fulfilled appointment was the greatest event the world had ever known.

1. *Its Timeliness.* Christ was born when the fulness of time had come. The earth waited in readiness for His coming despite the fact that He was not received. Everything was in readiness for this appointment. His coming could not have well been at any other time in earth's history.

Judaic teaching had prepared the way for Him. Its teaching of one God, of human worth, of spiritual values, and of eternal truth had set the stage for Him. It was the school teacher to lead men to Christ.

Pagan philosophies had accentuated the desperation of man. Socrates and Plato in Greece had come close to truth. This all the more demonstrated man's helplessness to redeem himself. Pagan philosophies had come close enough to truth that men were able to accept it when it came, but had so demonstrated the futility of man that the world was eager for its redeemer.

Even the physical was adorned and waiting. As has been so wonderfully pointed out, the Greeks had so covered the world with their language that the message of Christ had a beautiful tongue waiting to proclaim it. The Romans had so covered the world with its authority and its highways that the messengers could speed into all the corners of human existence with the glad tidings. The displaced Jews had colonized throughout the world with their worship and their synagogues, so the message everywhere had a waiting audience and a sounding board to all men.

It fulfilled the Scriptures. The time had come; no other would do. The prophets, poets and believers had foretold Him, and He came.

2. *The Nature of His Coming.* In every way the hand of Providence is seen. No other birth has ever been so wonderful. This fact, in itself, is sufficient demonstration that God had met man in Bethlehem.

The Virgin Birth is of such miraculous nature that it alone sets the birth of Christ apart from all other events of history. It represents the most sublime instance of God's appointment with man, as is summed up by these words to Mary: "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

The humbleness of Christ's birth is extraordinary when we consider that Joseph was of royal blood, being a descendant of David and the kings of Judah. Well might Joseph have lived in a palace, receiving the homage of his fellow men, but instead he was a humble carpenter who had to make the sacrifice of the poor (Luke 2:24) to commemorate the birth of his "son" and Lord. In God's own good way it so happened that this humble birth was in a stable room so that the Babe was laid in a manger.

FOR A ROYAL SON and a divine Lord to be so lowly born is, in itself, astounding and extraordinary. It did not simply happen; it had a purpose in God's appointment with man. Perhaps it was because the earth's rich men have a way of confining to themselves all that belongs to them. Christ was for all men, not merely the rich or the rulers. The fulfillment of God's appointment with man was announced to the lowly as well as to the lofty.

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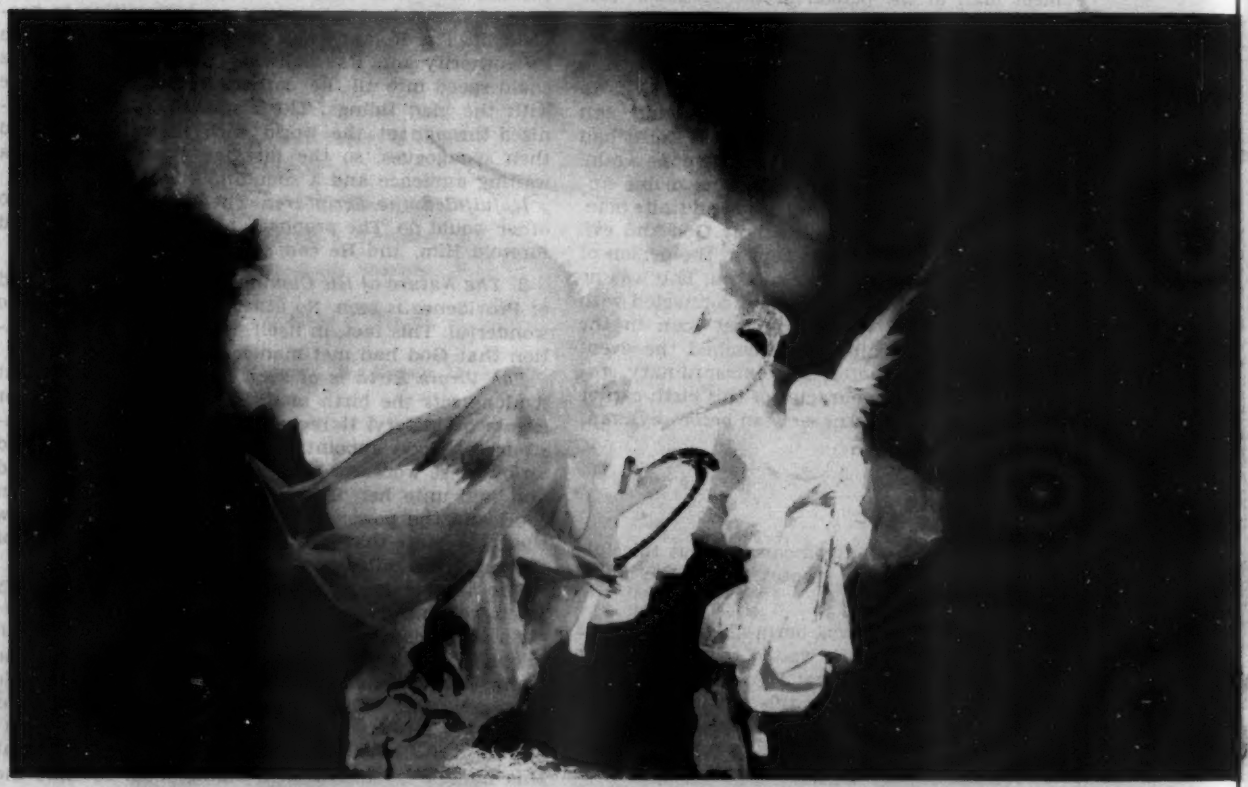
The ANGELS' SONGS

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 2:14)



Garnett

By David L. Lemons *Overseer of Arizona*

THESE WORDS FORM the anthem sung by the angels as their contribution to the joyous occasion when Christ the Saviour was born. It is altogether fitting that the "heavenly host" should break the stillness of the night with the joy of song that had been unemployed for 4000 years.

In accord with the will and concern of the heavenly Father, the angels sang at creation, and singing was surely in order, for God was pleased with His creation that was "very good." He made everything just right and in His finest art provided a bridal suite called the Garden of Eden. There he placed the first pair by whose cooperation He was to have many sons and daughters who were to be the object of His affection and who were of their own choosing to return love to Him.

I am sure it is beyond us to grasp the divine sentiment and emotion that moved the great Father-heart of God. The angels, however, were moved by His pleasure in anticipation of a great family and raised a joyful anthem to which God refers, "When the morning stars [angels] sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38:8; cf. Revelation 1:20, 9:1).

But, alas, this joy was short-lived, for Eden's beautiful picture was blighted with iniquity. The first pair sinned; their first-born son was a murderer, and the second son was dead. Sin thwarted the plan of God. Still His great heart yearned for those who would call Him Father and whom He would call sons and daughters.

Who can know the emotions of such a Father-heart? Jesus gives us a little understanding of it in the picture of the father of the prodigal son. Taking into full account the awfulness of sin and the ramifications thereof, God proposed to provide a way to redeem His family. Although they did not love Him, He loved them and love found a way to redeem. So God sent His only begotten Son who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of a virgin, cradled in the Bethlehem manger, announced by angels, identified by the star of the East, celebrated by the anthem of the heavenly host, and worshiped by sinners, sages, and saints (shepherds, wise men, Simeon and Anna).

This lovely infant in the arms of His blessed mother was God's message to man and the means of redemption. The smile of the holy Child spake a message of eloquence that challenged the powers of hell and filled heaven with music. The message said, "God still loves you and will forgive and restore you. God desires your love in return." What wonderful words of life!

Now hear the anthem of the angels whose melody had been silenced since sin's curse struck a discord that had thrown all creation out of tune and time with the Creator. But now heaven's organ registers treble tones of joy, faith, and hope which find their harmony in the bass tones that witness of the price and sacrifice of redemption. In time with God's purpose, the director's baton signals the "multitude of heavenly host" and God's estranged family on earth hears the good news, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

As far as is revealed in the Word, the angels sang no more. The devil is still the god of this world and sin abounds. Christ came "unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God" (John 1:11, 12).

ALTHOUGH THE ANGELS' song is silenced, their message is set to music in the hearts of those who accept its truth. And although the angels' song is not presently the prevailing song of earth, still it is the song in the hearts of the redeemed. It is sung by the choirs and congregations of the church, great and small. It is the song of faith in times of despair, the song of courage in times of conflict, the song of hope in the valley of death. Employed by imprisoned believers, it brought salvation for the jailer and deliverance for the singers. At the scene of their death, the martyrs' song brought conviction to the executioners and spectators. Missionaries in the distant and out-of-the-way places of earth sing the story until lisping, stammering tongues of the heathen join the refrain, "Oh, How I Love Jesus." The militant church bears up under its burden of responsibility and forces forward with tear-stained faces but with the song of angels that directs glory to God and promotes peace among men.

Thus the song continues and will continue until life's battles will be done and the redeemed of all ages will be assembled around the throne to sing redemption's song:

> *"Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth"* (Revelation 5:9, 10).

And then the angels who sang at creation's dawn for joyous prospect of God's family, and who sang the anthem of redemption, will sing again for joy that now the Father has about His throne sons and daughters, a multitude which no man can number. They will sing with eyes directed toward Him who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of a virgin, cradled in the Bethlehem manger, announced by angels, identified by the star of the East, celebrated by the anthem of the heavenly host, and worshipped by sinners, sages, and saints. Their song will be, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Revelation 5:12).

A SAVIOUR IS BORN

By Ruth Starnes
Greenwood, South Carolina

THE MANIFESTATION OF our Lord among men, the Son of Man and the Son of God in one, was the perfect realization of the highest unconscious longing or human nature. The theme of the entire Bible was the coming of the Son of God into the world. As early as Genesis 3:15, God had said to the serpent, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This was God's initial assertion that He was going to bring the creation of man to a success through the seed of the woman, and that seed was Christ.

In the dim past, God had chosen one particular family, that of Abraham, to be the family through which His Son would make His entrance into the world. The Hebrew nation was founded to fortify that family line of descent. After Abraham, the covenant was applied through the Davidic lineage. Even after David's family had fallen and it seemed as if God's promises would come to nought, prophet after prophet appeared on the scene to encourage the people. Then all through the Old Testament there were promises of Christ's coming. After the last of the prophets, Malachi thundered out a denunciation against Israel's sins, a period of spiritual darkness settled over the land. The promises of God and the glimpses and glimmerings of prophetical truth were the only things the people had to comfort them.

Roman power opened doors for the reception of the advancing gospel. Its universal rule and the fusion of the nations into one monarchy was considered a providential preparation for the preaching of the gospel when the Messiah would appear. The Jews were scattered everywhere with their synagogues and Scriptures, the Old Testament. Men in general became devotees of different gods, none of which brought satisfaction. The educated Roman regarded the Jew with a mixture of contempt and anger because of his uncompromising religion. The Jewish slaves in Rome clung tenaciously to their ancestral customs. It was impossible to make them conform to the ways of heathen households. Josephus states that some refused to eat anything but figs and nuts during their captivity to avoid defilement from gentile food.

One of the most important means by which the religion of Israel was preserved was the centralization and localization of its worship in Jerusalem. Wherever a Roman, a Greek, or an Asiatic might wander, he could take his gods with him or find rites kindred to his own. It was quite different with the Jews. The Jew had only one temple—the one in Jerusalem; he had only one God who had been throned between the cherubim and who was still King over Zion. That temple was the only place where God-appointed priests could offer acceptable sacrifices for the forgiveness of sins and fellowship with God. Here the high priest alone could go inside the innermost sanctuary once a year for a most solemn atonement. The seven-branched candlestick shed its perpetual light and from the golden altar rose the sweet odor of incense, symbolic of Israel's accepted prayers.

THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL pointed to Jerusalem, and the temple was the center of Jewish religion. Wherever the Jew sojourned, his heart beat in Jerusalem. Even though scattered to distant lands, the Jew would look with contempt on the idolatrous rites practiced around him. With pride he would go past the splendid temples of the heathen to his own humble synagogue. To the Jew the synagogue was the bond of union throughout the world. As Daniel of old, in his hour of worship, turned toward the holy city, so in the synagogue and in his prayers every Jew turned toward Jerusalem. The hope of the coming Messiah was the daily prayer of every devout Jew. He believed that Israel's kingdom would be restored and the dispersed returned to his homeland when this took place. This hope gave meaning to the Jews' worship. They eagerly awaited its fulfillment.

Jerusalem covered about three hundred acres. It had narrow streets in the business quarters with shops and bazaars along the streets. Within reach of the talk of the crowds that surged by was the tailor working his needle, the shoemaker hammering his sandals, the carpenter, or worker in iron and brass. If you could have been in Jerusalem and heard the silver trumpets of the priests as they awakened the city to prayer, or heard the strain of the Levites' music, or had seen the smoke from the sacrifices offered on the altar, it would have been difficult to believe that a Herod occupied the throne. Yet there he was, and everywhere his mark of cruelty and tyranny could be felt.

The time was ripe for Christ's advent. It was not in the solemn grandeur of the temple that the angel appeared. Neither did he go past the carpeted halls of Herod's palace to announce Christ's coming. But in the privacy of a humble home in Nazareth, to a virgin named Mary who was espoused to a man named Joseph, the angel made the announcement from God.

"And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David" (Luke 1:30-32).

The coming of Christ into the world was the greatest event ever to happen to man. God so loved the world that He chose to redeem man by sending His Son as a Saviour, God was so high above man that man could not understand Him. But when Christ came, He presented God to man and explained something of God's nature. God tabernacled among men in the person of Jesus Christ. The life of Christ reveals His own hidden glory and power. Christ came from heaven to live and die for His enemies.

Jesus is the only hope for sinners. If you would enter heaven, you must comply with the regulations in God's Word as your passport to enter. There is no comfortable intercourse between a holy God and sinful man except in and by a mediator. Our mediator is Christ. As a human, He reaches down to our nature, sympathizes with us, shows us that God knows our feelings, sorrows, and heartaches; then He brings God near to us.

In Christ's life, we have our example which shows us how to live. In His death, He is a sacrifice for our sins. In His resurrection, He is a conqueror. In His intercession, He is a high priest. He is the center of the world's history from beginning to end. He lived before the creation of the world. He spoke of Himself, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

The Saviour was so human that the shepherds could view His baby face in the straw; yet, He was so divine that the mighty must bow in profound reverence at His feet. Think of the wonder and glory of the meaning of our Saviour's birth to a world darkened by sin.

Our salvation rests in the finished work of Christ. God has narrowed salvation to one gate. When Jesus said, "I am the door," He presented only one way and excluded all other ways.

Christmas is a happy season. It is a time of festivity, merrymaking, giving, and receiving gifts. In all our celebrating, let us not forget that Christmas represents the birthday of our Lord. As we view the manger scene anew this season, it is with a holy hush upon the panel of our souls that we bow in adoration before this gift from God. All other gifts fade into nothingness as we behold Him—our Redeemer, our Saviour, our soon-coming King! Let us adore the Christ who lived, died, and rose again that we might have eternal life in heaven at the end of our pilgrim journey in this world.

"And she brought forth
her firstborn son, and wrapped
him in swaddling clothes,
and laid him in a manger; because
there was no room
for them in the inn." (Luke 2:7)

By Christopher C. Moree *Youth Director of Indiana*

NOT AS THE WORLD GIVETH

AS WE PAUSE during this blessed season to refresh our minds and fortify our souls for the new year before us, it would be wise to meditate quietly upon the startling events of almost two thousand years ago. From them one may draw strength and courage for these tumultuous days. With the spiritual ear one may hear the angels declare melodiously above the Judaean hills, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Or again the voice of Jesus may speak softly, but firmly, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." And, too, from out of the dim past the words of Isaiah may burst upon us bringing again the full import of his declaration that this Babe, which Mary tenderly cuddles in her arms, is in reality, " . . . Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," and reassuring our troubled hearts that "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end. . . ."

"The Prince of Peace." Peace, that elusive something for which the world has so vainly sought these many years, is the heart and core of Christmas. "Peace . . . not as the world giveth." Man at last has the opportunity to be at peace with his creator, with his fellow man and with himself. " . . . And on earth peace, good will toward men." This is the message of Christmas which God would have us grasp this yuletide.

"Not as the world giveth." The entire Christmas story rings of the supernatural—the prophecy of His coming, the announcements to calm the fears of both Mary and Joseph, His birth to the virgin Mary, and the announcement to the shepherds by the angel of the Lord and the heavenly host. Truly Jesus could say His peace was "not as the world giveth," for He had been given of God, in God's own way and manner, to meet the needs of the human race which was at enmity with God.

Man in his wildest imaginations had not dared dream of such a thing. True, men had written about gods, and had even dreamed about gods becoming men, but never had men concocted anything to rival this event in its simplicity and magnitude of promise to the people of earth. Not unto the wealthy, nor the noble, nor the mighty was the birth announcement given, but "unto you"—simple folk like the shepherds under the starlit heavens on a chilly night. The Saviour of the world was not born in a palace, a luxurious home, nor even in a humble inn. The Scriptures declare, "And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." Not as a great king or prince with immense earthly power to perform his mission, but as a small, innocent boy came Jesus into this world. Yes, the eternal God " . . . took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men."

"This day . . . a Saviour." Never before, perhaps, and never since has the world thought it needed a Saviour less than it did at the birth of Jesus. The world was not at war, the Jews had their righteousness, the Romans worshipped their many gods, and the Greeks had their wisdom. What, one may ask, could Jesus bring that the world did not already possess? "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son," shows that God knew even better than men what they needed. Nations were not at war, it is true, but Jesus brought peace to the troubled hearts of men who would believe on Him. The self-righteousness of the Jews was insufficient, the fires had gone out on the altars of the pagan gods of Rome and Greece, and the Greeks' wisdom had gone for nought. But Jesus was "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

BUT WHAT OF us today? Can this modern world discard the Christ of Christmas and still retain the peace which the angels promised, "and on earth peace, good will toward men"? Where is this peace? Surely the condition of the world since His birth has not been one of peace. The condition today is strongly reminiscent of Jeremiah's day when he cried, "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace." How vainly do the world's leaders meet in conference after conference futilely seeking the promise of the angels. It is not that the angels erred in their eagerness to proclaim glad tidings unto men; it is that men have so lost sight of the true meaning of peace that they have divorced it from the Christ of God.

The Amplified New Testament, a translation in modern-day language, shows this plainly. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is well pleased—men of good will, of His favor." In other words, the peace of God is limited to those with whom the Lord has found favor and whose lives please Him. So then the efforts of men have been in vain because they have been misdirected. Instead of trying to establish peace among men, their efforts should be to establish peace with God first, and peace among men will follow. God's divine formula could well be stated with the derisive words of Eliphaz, one of Job's comforters, as he admonishes the righteous Job who had found favor with God to "acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee." Sin broke man's fellowship with God in the garden, and sin today has caused God's displeasure with the world and sinful

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THE CHRIST OF

By Charles R. Beach
Sponsor, Pioneers for Christ Club, Lee College

WHILE THE GENTILE world celebrates the birth of a Christ of whom few gentiles are genuine followers, the ostracized Jew, who of all peoples should exhibit most a zealous devotion to the observance of the nativity, sits pitifully by as a much bewildered spectator.

And bewildered he has been for scores of Christmas seasons by a gift-exchanging world in which he believes that all gentiles are Christians—Christians who, to him, during the diabolical European inquisitions, imprisoned, burned, or exiled those of his people who would not submit to the dogmas of the church at Rome; Christians who, to him, as members of a growing number of American hate-mongering organizations and of hooded clans, have been and still are persecuting his race through anti-Semitic rantings and through increasing attempts at malicious destruction of his sacred places of worship.

This bewilderment can be removed only when the Jew is made fully to understand that all gentiles are not Christians and that a true follower of the Christ of Christmas is a real friend to instead of an enemy of the Jew. This essential understanding can be brought about only when the Jew is made to see his beloved Messiah through the efforts of witnessing Christians—Christians who realize that their risen Saviour came first and foremost to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24).

That He did indeed come primarily to the Jew is quite evident in every phase of His life and activities. The first angelic announcements were that He would come to save His people (the Jews) from their sins (Matthew 1:21) and that God would make Him their Ruler (Luke 1:32). The works of Christ were concentrated within the confines of Palestine, the Promised Land of the Jews, where He ministered to His

CHRISTMAS

people, preaching forgiveness of sin and healing sicknesses. This restriction of His earthly ministry to the Israelites is made even more obvious by an incident in which He shows apparent reluctance to impart to a gentile the blessings intended for His people (Matthew 15:22-28).

The Jewish nation to whom Christ had come, however, would not accept Him (John 1:11), and the result was that "blindness in part . . . happened to Israel" (Romans 11:25). God did not cast away His people (Romans 11:1); however, He did not and cannot "graff them in again" as long as they abide in unbelief or as long as they reject their promised Messiah (Romans 11:23).

As this mass rejection of Jesus by the majority of Israel increased, interest in the evangelization of the Jews diminished. Henceforth, for the last 1500 years of the church age, the gentile Christians, accepting the attitude that the Jew is virtually unconvertible, have shamefully evaded the challenge of bringing Christ to the Jew.

The exclusion of the Jew in the witnessing program of the Christian church has no doubt cost it untold blessings (Genesis 12:3). The inability of the church to grow more rapidly and to prosper more spiritually in the face of an upsurge in atheistic political systems, such as communism, might well be traceable to its failure to pray for and love the Jew sufficiently to tell him the gospel (Psalm 122:6). Most Christians know that a zealous Jew who has finally found his Messiah is an almost unstoppable witness for Christ. This knowledge may have been the reason for God's pattern of evangelization throughout the church age which called for the gospel to be preached in every country, city, and village, first to the lost sheep of Israel.

THE APOSTLE PAUL was well aware of this plan: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; TO THE JEW FIRST, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). Although he was called to be "a light of the Gentiles" (Acts 13:47), Paul adhered rather strictly to the pattern of preaching "to the Jew first" wherever he went.

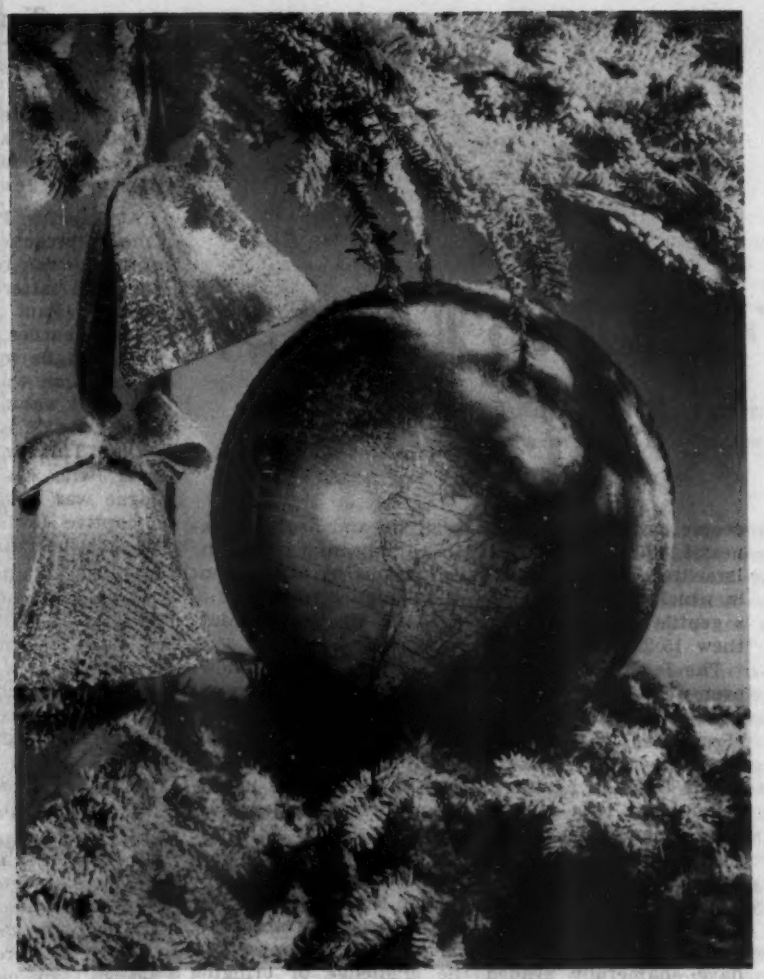
At Salamis, Paul and Barnabas, sent by the Holy Ghost, "preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews" (Acts 13:5). At Antioch they followed the same pattern (Acts 13:14 ff.). There the opposition incensed Paul and he declared that he would turn to the gentiles; but, before leaving the Jewish congregation, he voiced his conviction that the good news of salvation was designed to be brought first to the Jews: "It was necessary that the word of God should FIRST HAVE BEEN SPOKEN TO YOU [Jews]" (Acts 13:46). This statement reveals that the preaching of Paul (who was called to the gentiles) in the synagogue was not motivated solely by the presence of a captive Jewish audience but by a conscious plan of preaching first to these people.

Paul's indignation had subsided by the time he reached Iconium, for he and Barnabas again went directly into "the synagogue of the Jews" (Acts 14:1). Later, Paul "came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: And Paul, as his manner was [to preach to the Jew first?], went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasohed with them out of the scriptures" (Acts 17:1, 2). Unbelieving Jews caused him to be sent to Berea where he, as usual, "went into the synagogue of the Jews" (Acts 17:10).

At Corinth Paul again "reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks"; and he "was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ" (Acts 18:4, 5). The Jews were so abusive in their reaction that the Apostle, for the second time and with a note of finality, declared: "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth from this time forward I will go unto the Gentiles" (Acts 18:6). Paul's "henceforth" was not, however, long-lived; for when he, with Aquila and Priscilla, arrived at Ephesus, the great Apostle, resuming his normal pattern, "entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews" (Acts 18:19).

Thus it appears that Paul, though called to the gentiles, went, in almost every instance, first to the Jew with the gospel. Some of them he won to Christ. And heartening indications are that this age-old plan, when applied, may be working even better now than it did during the earlier part of this same church age. "Where Jewish mission work is efficiently and ably carried on," according to Joseph Hoffman Cohn, Director of the American Board of Missions to the Jews, Inc., "the actual conversions [of Jews] are some 3½ to 1 as compared to gentile results—money, populations, and effort being equal!" This fact alone should be sufficient encouragement for God's people to put

(Continued on page 16)



GOD'S CROWNING ATTRIBUTE

By Mrs. Syble Goff

Cleveland Tennessee

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

MANY ARE THE ATTRIBUTES of God but none so precious to the human heart as love. None is more fitting at this season of the year. The Christmas story has been told in many ways—of Joseph and Mary in a lowly manger, of shepherds on Judaean hills, of wise men coming from afar bearing precious gifts. But this story of the love of God reaches back into the infinite past. The omniscient God, looking down through the ages of time, saw the inevitable fall of mankind, and out of His great love a plan was formed to redeem the fallen. How sweet are the words of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 1:3, 4 "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

Our Scripture lesson reads: "For God so loved . . ." Nothing but His own loving-kindness impelled God to save men. He is the fountain of love and this attribute of His nature is pre-eminent. It runs through and dominates all the others. Verily, John tells us, "God is love."

The object of God's love is the world. Pharisaic interpretation had left the outside world in judgment, and had made Abrahamic descent and sacramental privilege the condition of life and freedom. But not so; the infinite plan of God never intended for salvation to be confined within the borders of Judaism. Many centuries before Christ, that incomparable figure of prophecy, that Hebrew aristocrat, Isaiah, wrote in the book that bears his name, "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious." And again, "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles. To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."

Love is unselfish and will find an outlet. That which God had planned in eternity He performed in time. God never works in a hurry, neither is He late. "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son . . ." No single event in the history of mankind can compare with the birth of Jesus. What love is this, beyond all comprehension, that He Who was equal with God should have, as it is written ". . . made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Many have believed that Christ was a perfect man. They have no trouble believing that He went about doing good or that His life was exemplary in every respect. But this is not sufficient. To reap the glorious benefits in Him, there must be that strong inward conviction that He is the only begotten Son of God, that "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

Micah in prophesying of the birth of Christ said, ". . . whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Christ Himself, in praying to the Father, spoke of ". . . the glory which I had with thee before the world was." And in Proverbs we read of Christ, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him."

How strangely moving is the story of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem of Judaea. But let us never forget that back of the swaddling clothes and the lowly manger were royal robes of purple and a throne. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." The greatest gift of God is conferred, not upon the wealthy, the deserving, or the fortunate, but upon the believing.

The glorious purpose of this gift was that men might not perish but have everlasting life—not only an abundant life here, but life throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. The poet who wrote that beautiful carol, "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," caught a glimpse of man beyond this vale of tears, of those who truly have tasted of life everlasting, and penned these words:

"For Lo! the days are hast'ning on,
By prophet-bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years
Comes round the age of gold!
When peace shall over all the earth
Its final splendor fling,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing!"

Amid the gifts, the Christmas cards, the bells, and the mistletoe, let us not crowd out the real meaning of Christmas. For the essence of Christmas is not in these things, but it is in telling anew the wonderful old, old story as uttered by St. John "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This, as one writer has said, is a volume in a verse, an ocean in a dewdrop, a hemisphere of light in a solitary luminary, an eternity of mystery and mercy! And, dear friend, the gospel declares that this is for you.

Christ, Our Peace

By F. J. May
Hattiesburg, Mississippi

IT HAPPENED THAT NIGHT so many centuries ago in the little Judaean town of Bethlehem—the incarnation of the Son of God in the form of a babe born to the virgin Mary. Just outside the town the message of His birth was announced to a few lowly shepherds who kept the night-watch over their flocks. Far away in the East there were wise men who also noticed what was happening, for the heavens above gave witness of His coming by the appearance of the guiding star which would direct the wise men over a long journey to worship the Christ Child. Later He was recognized by Simeon and Anna in the temple. After one look at the baby Jesus, Simeon was ready to die, and Anna spoke of Him to all them who looked for redemption in Jerusalem. When the wise men finally came, they worshipped Him and gave costly gifts to Him. Then they returned to their country another way. The "other way" meant a new way, a safe way, and a homeward way. So it is with all who really see Christ. He can be seen, loved, and worshipped not only in the ruggedness of the stable but also in the magnificence of the temple. Those who really see Him and know Him are ready to die, will speak of Him to others, and will have the true Christmas spirit of unselfish giving.

Let us now look at the angels' song which announced His birth. They sang to the shepherds, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Why did they say, "Peace on the earth?" Simply because that in Bethlehem there was a little Babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes who had come from the God of peace, and who was Himself the Prince of Peace. Seemingly, they were declaring that wherever Jesus is, there is peace. They were declaring that in the highest there was glory, and now on the earth there was peace. It reminds me of another song of praise that was sung, but this time not by angels; it was sung that day when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a colt. A whole multitude of disciples all around Jesus rejoiced and praised God with a loud voice because of the mighty works that they had seen. Listen to their song of prophetic praise. "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." They, like the heavenly host, gave praise to God. They, like the heavenly host, told of glory in the highest. But they differed about the message of peace. They said, "Peace in heaven," not "peace on earth." Why? Because Jesus was soon to go there. The first song announced His birth; the last song announced His death.

When Jesus came to the brow of the mountain overlooking Jerusalem, He stopped. For some time He was still, looking at the city. Then He began to weep, not as He had wept at the grave of Lazarus because He pitied His friends, but as the rejected Prince of Peace who wanted to give His blessing on all, but had been refused. With tender pathos in His voice, He said, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." What a tragic pity! Jerusalem had completely missed the blessing of the Messiah for which they had looked so long. They had not recognized their day of salvation; they were not cognizant of the things which belonged to their peace; and now with their day of salvation passed, they were blind to the truth. Mark also saw the irony of their oncoming fate. Jerusalem, whose name meant "city of peace," was soon to be destroyed and encompassed about with enemies, all because they knew not the time of their visitation.

Thus are seen two contrasting pictures which had to do with Jesus Christ. The message from them is simply this: to receive the Christ of Bethlehem is to have joyous peace. To receive Him is to accept the King of glory of which Isaiah prophesied, "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth for ever." Yes, in this world that can hardly know or maintain peace, no greater consolation can be had than knowing, loving, and worshiping the Christ of Christmas.

Now, may the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14).

APPOINTMENT IN BETHLEHEM

(Continued from page 3)

3. *Its Revelation.* When the fulness of time came, God revealed Himself in His Son to three groups of men and left it to these men to announce His coming to all other men. God revealed His coming to the Wise Men of the East, to the humble shepherds of Judea, and to holy Simeon and Anna in the Temple. Note that it was revealed to the wise, the lowly and the holy, and it was through them that the wicked and the proud were to hear that God had kept His appointment with man.

4. Finally, *the effects* of Christ's birth set it apart from all other events of history. Nothing less than the meeting of God and man in one Person could have caused such conflicting emotions in the hearts of men.

Holy men were moved to *worship.* Even the shepherds gave awed homage to Him when they made their way to the manger. (If He had been born in a palace or even a wealthy home, would they, or could they, have gained admittance to His side?) Simeon and Anna were moved to anointed worship of the spirit. It was as compulsive in them as it had been to Mary while she bore Him in her womb or to Elisabeth while she stood in His unborn presence (Luke 1:44).

The birth of this Child *struck fear* to the hearts of the wicked. This was no ordinary birth; this was God's meeting with man, and even powerful Herod was scared. He did not have a holy fear, but one which moved him to crime, the crime of murdering innocent children in an effort to murder the Christ.

The Wise Men were moved to *discretion.* They were able to recognize the evil intent of Herod and helped to circumvent it. In every way the hand of God was seen. No other birth has ever had such startling effect on so many different persons.

God kept His appointment with man when Christ was born and moved heaven and earth to do so. Now He has another appointment to be kept when Christ returns and He will move heaven and earth to keep it.

NOT AS THE WORLD GIVETH

(Continued from page 9)

men. Only Christ Jesus can once again establish peace between God and man.

Realizing as we do that ". . . the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus," what do we plan to make of this Christmas season? Shall it be like many others of the past, a time of hustle, bustle, worry, and trouble, or shall it once again be a time of quiet meditation and a blessed event in our lives? Will we let our lives be filled with the fruit of spiritually blind men of today, "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth," lives "overcharged with . . . cares of this life," and souls troubled as the very earth seems to rock and tremble under the weight of sin and ever present destruction; or will we let the peace of God flood our souls with His blessed assurance.

"Peace, peace, wonderful peace, coming down from the Father above, sweep over my spirit forever I pray, with fathomless billows of love," ring the strains of that lovely old hymn. "Peace . . . not as the world giveth," said Jesus. "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid," He breathed upon them. Oh, that we might hear His words again clearly as we lift our eyes from this world to our soon coming King, who shall cause peace to reign again upon the earth as well as in the hearts of those "with whom He is well pleased, men of good will, of His favor."

THE CHRIST OF CHRISTMAS

(Continued from page 11)

new or added emphasis on Jewish evangelism from this Christmas forward.

The very life of every consecrated Christian is centered on the Christ of Christmas. This same Christ can be made the center of Christmas and of the life of many of the spiritually hungry children of Israel as well. It can be done by a simple increase in efforts to witness to the Jew on the part of every child of God who is "not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; TO THE JEW FIRST, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16).

(Note: Helpful information and basic instructions on the subject of witnessing to the Jew may be obtained free of charge by writing to the Pioneers for Christ Club, Lee College, Cleveland, Tennessee.)

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testimonies

Prays for Healing

SURRENCY, Ga.—I want to praise the dear Lord for the many times He has healed my body. I have been healed of a cancer on my hand, of kidney stones, gall stones, and numerous other ailments. I have been healed of asthma twice, but after a period of time it came back. I am asking everyone who knows the worth of prayer to please pray especially that God will heal me completely of these dreaded asthmatic attacks. Only the good Lord knows the suffering.

I thank the Lord for our band of prayer warriors at Zion. When I call on them to pray, I always get relief. —*Mrs. W. G. O'Quinn*

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Praise God— Past and Present

BRUNSWICK, Ga.—I thank God for what He has done and what He is going to do. He has healed my body many times and He heals my children. He has saved my soul and I know He is always going to help us. I thank Him for that also.

—*A sister in Christ*

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Healing Is Gradual But Wonderful

BRONX, N. Y.—Recently I wrote in a request for prayer for my little girl who had a growth on her neck. It looked very bad, even cancerous. We didn't have a diagnosis because we were trusting God completely. This was really a trial of our faith because it lingered for months. One day my mother met a lady who had a gland to burst on her neck. This resembled my baby's condition in every detail and she said she suffered agony. Well, praise God! Through all this my baby apparently suffered no pain and was her energetic self. Even though it was a gradual healing, it was a wonderful one. I do praise God for it. Please pray that this healing will be complete and that it won't leave a scar.

I am so glad I know Christ as my Saviour and healer. I do desire to serve Him better and let my light shine brighter. I do enjoy the good articles in the *Evangel*. I read it from cover to cover. I forget the discomfort of a crowded subway when I read the *Evangel*. I always pass the paper on so that someone else might be blessed by it also. —*Mrs. Opal Cotton*

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God Answers Long-Time Prayers

ALBANY, Ga.—I have been impressed to give my testimony to the *Evangel*. I want to give honor to God for bringing my husband back to me after 27 years. I want to honor God for answering prayer. After I had held on many years, God came to my rescue when I needed Him the most and sent my husband back to me. I also want to thank God for healing me. He can do great things. For all this I honor Him. He has all power in heaven and earth.

—*Mrs. Ruth Shives*

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God Heals, X-Rays Show Nothing Wrong

DAYTON, Ohio—I want to thank the Lord first of all for saving my soul. I thank Him for His many blessings to me and I give Him all the glory for healing me. I believe God healed me when I was prayed for at prayer meeting just two days before I entered the hospital. I had been so used to eating very light that I was still afraid to try to eat foods that had previously hurt me. But at the hospital I ate what they gave me and found that those foods no longer caused me pain. The x-rays showed there was nothing wrong with my stomach. I am now eating foods that I have not been able to eat for about three years. I truly thank God. Pray for me that I will receive the Holy Ghost and stand true. —*Harles Huff*

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God Manifests Power to Heal

VERNON Texas—On the night of October 23, I was in the prayer line along with others. I had been suffering from gall bladder trouble. Brother Ussery asked the pastor's wife to lay her hand where the pain was. During the prayer, a light shone down from heaven and God healed me. At the same time He healed two other sisters sitting close by. —*Mollie Chennault*

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God Heals After Stroke

TARPON SPRINGS, Fla.—I want to thank the good Lord for what He has done for me and for my mother. He healed her after she had had a stroke which left her partially paralyzed. I can never praise Him enough.

—*Effie Sapp*

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God Saves and Heals

BALTIMORE, Md. — I want to thank God for saving my sister and me. I thank Him for His many blessings to me and for healing my body. I can never thank God enough. Please pray that God will save my loved ones before it is too late. —*Doris Hedgepeth*

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God Heals Instantly

GRANITE CITY, Ill.—I am a girl of 17 and I am not a Christian. I have colds very often and also attacks of asthma. Once when I was really sick, my sister called Brother Steel and another member of the Church of God in Granite City to pray for me. I told God if He would heal me I would write to the *Evangel* and tell everyone. He healed me that night; I really had a good night's sleep. I want everyone to pray for me.

—*Sara Parker*

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God Delivers at Death's Door

LAKELAND, Ga.—I want to sound a note of praise to the Lord for what He has done for my sister. She had once known God but had gone back in sin. God had to get her to death's door before she

would turn back to Him. We kept holding on to God till He brought deliverance. I promised God that if He would deliver her, I would send my testimony to the *Evangel*.

Please pray for the rest of my family. —*Mrs. E. P. Hutto*

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God Heals Growth

ARCADIA, Fla.—I want to praise God for His healing power. Some time ago there came a growth on my face. It would itch, get sore, and bleed at times. It was getting larger all the time and would turn black at times. I kept praying and asking God to take it off. One morning when I awoke, it was completely gone. I praise His wonderful name, it is still gone. Pray for me that I will always be doing or saying something for my Lord.

—*Mrs. Emma Whidden*

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A Wonderful Saviour and Healer

TAMPA, Fla.—I want to praise and thank the good Lord for what He is to me. A few weeks ago I was suffering with my right side. It was about eleven o'clock at night when it began hurting so badly. I told my husband that something had to be done at once. I thought about the *Evangel* and *Abundant Life Magazine* that we had. I laid both of them on my side where the hurting was and asked the dear Lord to let it be as if they were the hands of the ones that pray over them before they are sent out. In just a few minutes my side was completely easy, and it hasn't bothered me again. I promised the Lord that if He would heal me I would send in my testimony. I do praise His holy name because He is such a wonderful Saviour and healer. —*Mae Franklin*

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He Is My Master

WHEELING, W. Va.—I want to thank the dear Lord and testify of my Saviour's wonderful love for me. He is my Saviour, sanctifier, baptizer and healer. Praise His holy name.

About 3 years ago, He saved me and healed me of sinus trouble. A few weeks later He healed me of bursitis and a little later He healed a gall condition that I had suffered with for a long time. About 6 months ago I suffered a terrible pain in my right shoulder. The doctor said it was a calcium spur and would require an operation. I trusted God to do the operating. One night as our pastor, Sister Caroline Backman, was praying for me, the Lord told her to put her Bible on my shoulder. When she did, the most awful pain shot through me and came out under my ribs. The calcium spur was gone! Praise His name! He truly is the great physician. He is my Master, my everything. Pray that I will stand true and be able to lead souls to this great Redeemer.

—*Mrs. Clyde B. Nickerson*

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God Knows No Limit

EMPIRE, Ga.—It is wonderful what God can do. I told God if He would heal my body I would send my testimony to the *Evangel*. I read Brother Holt's testimony in the *Evangel* and I wrote to him and requested that he pray for me. I received a letter from the pastor's wife, saying they had prayed about my condition. I had had a severe stomach trouble for two years. Thank God I am much better now. I feel stronger than I have for a long time. God's grace is sufficient and there is no limit to what He can do. —*A sister in Christ*

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God Heals Through "Evangel"

DONALSONVILLE, Ga.—I want to sound a note of praise to my blessed Lord for what He did for me. A few nights ago, when I came in from work, my right leg hurt from my hip down. For two nights I didn't rest well. I laid the *Evangel* on it and told the Lord if He would heal me I would praise Him through the *Evangel*. He took me at my word and my leg hasn't hurt me since. I do praise Him for every blessing of life. I have enjoyed serving Him. For nearly twelve years He has been real in my life. Pray for me. —*Mamie Hughes*

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Praises God for Healing

GETTYSBURG, S. Dak.—For a long time I have felt that I should send the testimony of my healing to the *Evangel* for the glory of God. About 4½ years ago a growth began to develop on the side of my nose. It was very noticeable and at times pained me. It seemed to affect other parts of my face and body. I had it prayed for a number of times, but I did not get complete deliverance. This summer at the North and South Dakotas' camp meeting, some of the brethren prayed for me. At that time it had been getting worse, but praise God, in about two weeks, it was nearly gone. In about a month there remained only a slight mark where once an ugly growth had been. Jesus healed me because of the goodness and mercy of God. My healing seems almost too good to be true. I would encourage all who have been prayed for and have not been healed to keep believing. Go back and be prayed for until deliverance comes.

—*Victor E. Nelson*

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God Answered Prayer

LUBBOCK, Texas — Six months ago I promised the Lord if He would come to my rescue and answer my prayer that I would send my testimony to the *Evangel*. My husband had a nervous breakdown and was so bad that the doctors sent him to the hospital in Dallas, Texas. They said he would have to stay in the hospital for at least six months. I prayed and asked the Lord to send him home in two or three weeks. The Church of God here, where we are members, had special prayer for him also and God did answer my prayer. He was back home in three weeks and is now back at work. Glory to God in the highest for His wonderful healing power. It is wonderful to know we have a God we can serve and call upon in time of need.

—*Mrs. O. L. Langston, Jr.*

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God Heals Leukemia and Rheumatic Fever

CANTON, Ohio—About a year ago my little nine-year-old girl, Patty, became quite ill. I took her to a doctor who said he would feel better if I saw another doctor. I took her to another doctor who called in a blood specialist. They both told me my little girl had leukemia, a rare blood disease of which there is no cure, but I didn't worry, because I knew God still answered prayer. The disease was in its last stage. Patty had lumps under her arms as large as an egg, and new lumps were springing up on other parts of her body. I put in a long distance call to Brother L. G. Rouse, and he said "Believe, the child is healed right now." In less than 24 hours all the lumps were gone from her body, and when I took her back to the doctor for another blood test, the blood was clear. Three doctors had said she had leukemia, but, thank God, she was healed. Just recently she was healed of rheumatic fever. We called Brother Rouse, who was in West Virginia at the time. Even while she was in bed, it seemed her heart was running away. He told me to go and lay hands on her and the Lord would heal her. She was healed. She has gained 15 pounds since she was healed a year ago this December. Your prayers have helped us so much.

—*Mrs. Mary Wilson*

family devotions

By MRS. PAUL S. COOK, Memphis, Tennessee

LOOK FORWARD AND PREPARE FOR HIS COMING

Memory Verse: *"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ"* (Titus 2:13).

Monday, December 22

Scripture, Luke 12:35-40

As we look forward with expectation to the approaching Christmas holidays, may we not commemorate Christ's birth with overcrowded lives, busy hearts, and a vain hustling to and fro. Rather, let us fill our lives with the expectancy of the coming of the Prince of Peace and the establishment of His kingdom on earth. Looking forward with this hope, may we purge ourselves. From every hidden corner, let us drag out all imperfections and receive a cleansing from Christ.

Grant, O God, that we can kneel as the wise men and shepherds, in sincere adoration and praise.

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Tuesday, December 23

Scripture, Ephesians 4:25-32

"Let All Bitterness." To be prepared for the King's return this season, all traces of bitter feeling in our hearts must be cleansed—every secret grudge, every poisonous drop of jealousy, and every cursed bit of envy. If we have allowed the root of bitterness to spring up in our hearts because of a wrong inflicted upon us, then we know not of God's unspeakable gift, nor can we receive the peace of which the angels sang.

God, help us to lay aside all ancient grudges and bitter quarrels of the past and prepare our hearts for the coming of Christmas.

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Wednesday, December 24

Scripture, Proverbs 16:23-33

"And Evil Speaking." If our lips criticize, we will find a lack of power in our lives. Unkind, sarcastic remarks should not be handled by true children of God. Let this day be a time for each member of the family to examine his heart as the Christmas celebrations begin. Put aside ill feelings and let all hearts unite as one in the bond of love. Only then will the Babe of Bethlehem find room in each heart this Yuletide season.

Pray that we will not let unkind words pass our lips to mar the season's gladness.

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Thursday, December 25

Scripture, Isaiah 9:6, Romans 13:10-14

"And Be Ye Kind." We expect too much of the Christmas season. Into this day we try to crowd all the deferred payments of tenderness and human kindness. However, the kindliness of Christmas should be a continuous act in the life of a Christian. May our kindliness this day flow into all the days that follow, so that it will live long after all the gaily wrapped packages have been discarded.

We pray, O Father, that with the passing of each Christmas, we may be a little kinder one toward another.

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Friday, December 26

Scripture, 2 Peter 1:4-10

"Tenderhearted." Another Christmas has gone. Has it passed with the warmth and happiness that would please Christ? If God should weigh our lives, would He find us wanting in the tenderness of love—in our deeds, in our choice of words, and in our treatment of others? Honoring Christ is more than the presents under the tree—it is the tenderness that Mary felt as she gazed upon her first-born. It is the love of the Christ in a manger that brought salvation to a sinful world. This same love can transfigure our own lives until we glow with that divine radiance and tenderness.

We pray, O God, that Thou wilt set our hearts aflame with loving compassion for a lost world.

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Saturday, December 27

Scripture, Colossians 3:12-17

"Forgiving One Another." God hates the ugliness of an unforgiving spirit. We can only truly forgive by forgetting and by throwing off the spirit of pride that we carry. A proud, unforgiving heart will blight our spiritual fruit and cause a deep shadow to come between us and our God. It will also hinder our prayers from being answered; for there is a necessity of forgiving others if God is to forgive us.

Pray that God will soften our hearts until we can forgive, thereby making our Christian experience a happy and joyful one.

Pray that the Lord will remove the cataracts from my eyes.
—George, a shut-in

— — —

Pray that God's perfect will may be done regarding a special request.
—Mrs. D. A. Dennis
Verbena, Ala.

— — —

Pray for our church. Pray also that God will move greatly in the midst of our young people.
—Mary E. Guinn

— — —

Pray earnestly for the Guion Church because Satan is trying to overcome us. *—Bessie Smith*
Guion, Ark.

— — —

Pray for my grandson to be healed and saved, for his parents and older brother to be saved, for my daughter to be saved, and for my son-in-law to be healed. Pray that we will have a revival. Also pray for an urgent unspoken request.
—A sister in need

— — —

Pray that my husband will be healed of throat trouble.
—Mrs. Alvin Brown
Everglades, Fla.

— — —

Pray for the healing of my baby and the healing of my body. Also pray for a very urgent unspoken request. *—Mrs. Bessie Driggers*
Winnsboro, S. C.

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JANUARY 1959 TRAINING COURSE

O. W. Polen, National Sunday School and Youth Director, writes about "Workers' Training Course No. 4."

"Earl P. Paulk, Jr., author of Workers' Training Course No. 4, has written this book in an easily understood and yet most effective style. He has approached the subject of Sunday School Evangelism in a very practical manner. The text is rich in Scriptural content and application.

The author has not prepared this course of study solely from a standpoint of theory. He has drawn heavily from his rich background of experience as one of the most successful Sunday School pastors in the Church of God. His ever growing congregation in the Hemphill Avenue Church of God, Atlanta, Georgia, is indicative of the "know-how" he possesses with reference to Sunday School mechanics. And, even more important than this, the spirit of evangelism that exists in the author's church and Sunday School is convincing in itself that he strongly believes and practices putting "first things first."

To serve as pastor of one of the largest churches in the Church of God denomination no doubt provides this Sunday School enthusiast with a keen insight into the workings of a Sunday School and the need for strong evangelistic emphasis. However, his experience and background are by no means limited to this one area of church work. He has served as pastor of smaller churches. He has served as college instructor, as state Sunday School and youth Director, and as a member of the National Sunday School and Youth Board. The scope of his training and experience is wide.

All who study this course will find satisfaction in knowing that the progressive pastor who wrote this book is practicing very successfully the methods of Sunday School Evangelism he suggests in this text and is ever emphasizing to his eager congregation the need of winning the lost to Christ and of effectively teaching the Word of God in the Sunday School Department of his church.

Author Paulk appropriately asks, "Can we afford, in these closing days, to fail?" Dedicated workers who study this course will find the answer readily in their own hearts. It will be, "No, we cannot fail. We must not fail."

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